(NGRBA) held on 5th October 2009, under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Prime Minister, it was decided to declare River Dolphin as National Aquatic Animal. River dolphin is critically endangered species in India and is an indicator species of the health of the river. Therefore, it has been decided to declare the species as national aquatic animal.

(c) The important steps taken to protect River Dolphins are as given below:

(i) River Dolphins have been included in the Schedule-I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, thereby affording them the highest degree of protection.

(ii) The important habitats of river dolphins have been declared as Protected Areas for their conservation.

(iii) Financial & technical assistance is provided to the State Governments under Centrally Sponsored Schemes for conservation and protection of wildlife including dolphins and their habitat.

(iv) Financial assistance is provided for conducting scientific research on the habitat, behavior, population status of river dolphins.

Resettling of villages situated in reserved areas in MP

†2662. SHRI RAGHUNANDAN SHARMA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 117 villages are situated in the interior parts of 34 reserved areas of Madhya Pradesh;

(b) the total expenditure likely to be incurred on resettling these people out of such reserved areas;

(c) the funds sanctioned by the Central Government for the purpose alongwith the amount of funds released so far; and

(d) the number of villages which have been resettled, so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) and (b) Out of a total of 735 villages located in the protected areas of Madhya Pradesh only 117 villages are proposed to be relocated outside. This relocation involves an estimated expenditure of Rs. 3200 crores.

(c) Funds have been released to the State Government as per the availability of grants. Details of releases of relocation of villages are as follows:

(Rs. in lakh)

Year	Sanctioned	Released
2006-07	237.181	230.00
2007-08	2039.5768	2039.5768
2008-09	24186.49	5819.12

(d) 86 villages have been relocated till date.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.